

Glenn, John

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President Muzzles Sen. Glenn But SALT Sellers Brown, Brzezinski Allowed To Speak Freely About Pact

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President Carter's successful attempt to muzzle Sen. John Glenn (D-Ohio) is instructive because it demonstrates Mr. Carter's idea of what constitutes a fair debate about SALT II: anything the Administration's SALT-sellers have to say about SALT is educational and in the public interest; if, however, a SALT critic wants to offer publicly some constructive criticism about the U.S.-Soviet pact, well, this is not in the national interest and might jeopardize SALT II.

Now, to look at Sen. Glenn you wouldn't think he's the kind of guy who would wreck the SALT talks, even if he were convinced—as many are—that this might well be the highest act of patriotism he would perform while a Senator. An Elder in the Presbyterian Church and the first American to orbit the Earth, he has participated in many charitable causes including the Walk for Mankind, Prevention of Blindness, the U.S.S. Hope, St. Jude's Hospital, the Special Olympics, and the National Sickle Cell Association.

But still, President Carter was worried when he got wind of what the Senator was going to say in some remarks in Groton, Connecticut, on April 7, at the christening ceremonies for the U.S.S. Ohio, the nation's first Trident submarine and the largest under-sea vessel in the world.

What bothered the President, who had seen an advance on the Senator's talk, was that Mr. Glenn planned to raise some troublesome questions about the verification problems with SALT, a subject which the Ohio Democrat has studied closely and which has worried him for some time. So, just as the Senator was leaving for the airport to fly to Groton, he got a telephone call from Mr. Carter. As Mr. Glenn tells it, the President said that he felt that the Senator's remarks might have a damaging effect on the delicate, ongoing SALT talks. Mr. Carter clearly indicated that he wished that Mr. Glenn would omit portions of what he planned to say. The Senator ultimately agreed and did this.

So, what was it the Senator planned to say that might have been harmful to the SALT talks? The following are excerpts from the press release on the unexpurgated version of the Senator's original remarks:

"GROTON, Connecticut—Declaring that the loss of U.S. listening posts in Iran 'unless replaced by other means not now apparent, casts grave doubts on our ability to verify Soviet compliance' with terms of a second Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, Sen. John Glenn (D-Ohio) today revealed that he has urged President Carter to propose to Russian negotiators acceptance of one of a pair of new verification proposals...."

"Verifying Soviet compliance with SALT II's terms is essential, Glenn said, to develop confidence in a world community that is skeptical of Russian intentions."

"By agreeing to tough verification standards, and by sticking to them, the Russians will greatly aid the cause of arms reductions. Without verification, suspicion will fuel delay and another generation may pass before there is any meaningful scaling down of nuclear arms," said Glenn.

"To ensure such verification, Glenn told the Groton audience, he urged President Carter at a Monday meeting at the White House to seek one of the following from the Soviet negotiators prior to finalizing the Treaty:

"PERMISSION for U.S. monitoring aircraft to fly on an agreed-upon track within Soviet airspace during test launches, which would be conducted on a prior notification basis by the Russians. The U.S. already notifies other nations before its missile launches, which are made over international waters, while Soviet tests are within their borders with no real notification."

"Or, RENEWAL of the concept of monitoring stations within the Soviet Union. This proposal was discarded by negotiators when it appeared that the U.S. had satisfactory monitoring stations outside the U.S.S.R., but is a principle previously agreed to by the Soviets in Comprehensive Test Ban discussions."

"Acceptance of either proposal would not give the United States an advantage. It would only give each nation a comparable monitoring base," said Glenn.

"The ball would be in their court. It is their testing that is kept secret. We've been able to adapt to that in the past, but recent events make it virtually impossible to check on the Russians with anything approaching reliability."

"Without satisfactory monitoring capability, I think the chances of ratifying SALT II in the Senate will be very slim. Much as the American people want arms reduction, they don't trust the Russians."